

Message Text

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SUBJECT: G.K. REDDY ON KEWAL SINGH'S APPOINTMENT AS INDIAN AMBASSADOR
TO U.S.

FOLG SENT ACTION NEW DELHI FM MADRAS SEP 16 REPEATED TO YOU.

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UNCLAS MADRAS 1681

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US
SUBJECT: G.K. REDDY ON KEWAL SINGH'S APPOINTMENT AS INDIAN
AMBASSADOR TO US

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF G.K. REDDY ARTICLE TITLED:
"KEWAL SINGH, ENVOY TO US" APPEARING IN SEPTEMBER 16
HINDU.

QUOTE.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY,
MR. KEWAL SINGH, AS THE NEXT INDIAN AMBASSADOR
TO THE UNITED STATES, IN THE PLACE OF MR. T.N. KAUL,
WAS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED TODAY.

HE IS EXPECTED TO ASSUME CHARGE OF HIS ASSIGNMENT IN
WASHINGTON NEXT MONTH, AFTER MR. KAUL HAS PROCEEDED
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ON LEAVE BEFORE RETURNING TO INDIA TO TAKE UP HIS NEW

APPOINTMENT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF CULTURAL RELATIONS IN DELHI.

AS FOREIGN SECRETARY FOR NEARLY FOUR YEARS, MR. KEWAL SINGH HAD BEEN CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH ALMOST EVERY PHASE OF INDIAN DIPLOMACY IN DEALING WITH THE UPS AND DOWNS OF INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS DURING THE CRUCIAL PERIOD THAT FOLLOWED THE BANGLADESH CONFLICT. IN HIS NEW ROLE AS AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES, HE WILL BE PLAYING AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT PART IN RESTORING A REASONABLY GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AFTER THE FORTHCOMING AMERICAN ELECTIONS.

MR. KEWAL SINGH WILL NATURALLY UTILISE THE INTERREGNUM BETWEEN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN EARLY NOVEMBER AND THE INAUGURATION IN LATE JANUARY TO GET BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE CHANGING AMERICAN SCENE, BEFORE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION ASSUMES OFFICE. SINCE THIS IS AN EXTRAORDINARY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION INVOLVING A CLASH OF PERSONALITIES AS WELL AS ISSUES, IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO WATCH THE FINAL STAGES OF THIS DRAMA FROM A RINGSIDE SEAT RATHER THAN FROM A DISTANT PLACE LIKE DELHI.

THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW INDIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON PROCEEDS THE IMPENDING CHANGE AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN DELHI AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THE PRESENT U.S. AMBASSADOR, MR. WILLIAM SAXBE, IS DUE TO LEAVE EARLY NEXT YEAR ON COMPLETION OF HIS NORMAL TENURE WHICH COINCIDES WITH THE ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE BY THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON. THE VERY PRESENCE OF THE NEW ENVOYS IN THE TWO CAPITALS WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AFTER THIS MOMENTOUS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

IF THERE HAVE BEEN UNEXPECTED SETBACKS EVEN AFTER THE TWO SIDES HAVE MADE A CONCERTED ATTEMPT TO SHED THE BITTER MEMORIES OF 1971 WHEN INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS HIT THE ROCK BOTTOM, THERE WAS NOTHING THAT INDIA COULD DO TO PREVENT THE REVIVAL OF THE OLD DISTRUST OF EACH OTHER'S POLICIES AND ATTITUDES. AS A WHOLE-HOGGER, MR. T.N. KAUL MADE A GALLANT UNCLASSIFIED

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EFFORT TO HEAL THE BREACH AND RESTORE SOME DEGREE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE. HE WAS BADLY LET DOWN BY DR. KISSINGER AND HIS COHORTS WHO ALSO PLACED MR. SAXBE IN THE MOST EMBARRASSING POSITION BY DISINGENUOUSLY TIMING THE RESUMPTION OF U.S. ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN WITH THE ASSUMPTION OF HIS DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENT IN DELHI.

THOUGH HE DID HIS BEST TO HALT THIS SECOND SLIDE-DOWN,

MR. KAUL FOUND HIMSELF OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS IN THE KIND OF PARALYSING ATMOSPHERE THAT WAS PERVADING WASHINGTON IN THE WAKE OF WATERGATE AND VIETNAM. HE NOW RETURNS TO INDIA A SADDER BUT WISER MAN, REALISING THAT IT WAS A GREAT MISTAKE ON HIS PART TO HAVE RELIED SO HEAVILY ON AN EXPONENT OF REALPOLITIK LIKE DR. KISSINGER IN WHOSE CONCEPT OF A FIVE POLAR WORLD INDIA DOES NOT FIND ITS DUE PLACE.

AS THE LAST OF THE ICS FOREIGN SECRETARIES, MR. KEWAL SINGH FUNCTIONED QUITE DIFFERENTLY FROM HIS PREDECESSOR, MR. T.N. KAUL, IN PLACING GREATER RELIANCE ON CONVENTIONAL DIPLOMACY RATHER THAN PERSONAL DYNAMISM. IN BOTH STYLE AND TEMPERAMENT HE IS THE VERY OPPOSITE OF MR. KAUL, BUT THEIR COMPLEMENTARY PERSONALITIES PROVIDED FOR EXCELLENT TEAM SPIRIT WHEN THEY WORKED TOGETHER IN THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTRY. IT WAS CERTAINLY IN THE FITNESS OF THINGS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS CHOSEN MR. KEWAL SINGH TO A KEY DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENT TO PICKUP THE THREADS OF PAINSTAKING DIPLOMACY DONE BY MR. KAUL AND DO WHATEVER HE CAN IN HIS OWN WAY TO IMPROVE INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

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